



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REP. THOMPSON RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR HUMAN RELATIONS IN EDUCATION

ORLANDO --- In recognition of her lifelong commitment to promoting civil rights and public education, state Representative Geraldine Thompson (D-Orlando) has been named a recipient of the Mary McLeod Bethune Human Relations in Education Award from the Florida Education Association.

The prestigious award is presented to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in the promotion of human and civil rights. Recipients also must have displayed a positive, widespread and significant social, educational, economical or political impact.

Leaders in the Florida Education Association, a statewide organization that works on behalf of educators, have named Representative Thompson a 2010 recipient of the award due to her efforts to promote better understanding of minorities and women. She will be presented the award at an October 29 luncheon at the Omni Rosen Centre Hotel in Orlando.

Carl Howard, a member of the FEA Governance Board that submitted nominations for the award, said Representative Thompson has helped to achieve significant public awareness of age, gender and racial inequalities. Additionally, he said, she has brought attention to issues facing the disadvantaged and has advanced inter-group understanding within the education community.

Representative Thompson is a former classroom teacher in Orange County Public Schools, and the former director of the Equal Opportunity Office at Valencia Community College, where she served for 24 years as assistant to the president. She also served on the Florida Commission of Human Relations. She is the author of "Black America Series: Orlando, Florida," published in 2003. Representative Thompson serves on the Board of the Association to Preserve African American

Society, History & Tradition, Inc. and the Holocaust Memorial and Resource Center.

During her tenure in the Florida House of Representatives, she has filed legislation to outlaw the mutilation of young women, toughen penalties for hate crime perpetrators, and worked to obtain \$1.8 million in trust fund monies for a student who was injured in a local public school. She also has been a leader in legislative efforts to increase access to healthcare for women diagnosed with breast cancer.

Representative Thompson serves as the House Democratic leader pro tempore and represents Florida House District 39 in Orlando. She provided the following statement:

“Mary McLeod Bethune was an extraordinary educator, civil rights leader, and government official who founded the National Council of Negro Women and Bethune-Cookman College. It is a tremendous honor for me to be named a recipient of such an important award that pays tribute to Mary McLeod Bethune and all those who are committed to continuing her service by improving education and human relations in our great state.”

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